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SONIC UNIVERSE™

SPARK
OF LIFE

1

**NEW
STORY ARC!**

UNIVERSE | 71



Tracy
Yardley!
Hunzeker

**PLUS: WHO OR WHAT IS
PHAGE?!**



Welcome to Sonic's comic book adventures – a world beyond what you know from the SEGA games! Where, as strange new threats emerge, NICOLE – the advanced artificial being – is confronted by a figure from her past...



**CHARACTER
= SELECT =**



**PRINCESS
SALLY ACORN
FREEDOM FIGHTER LEADER**



**NICOLE THE
HOLO-LYNX
ADVANCED A.I.**



**MILES "TAILS"
PROWER
YOUNG GENIUS**



???

SONIC UNIVERSE™

PREVIOUSLY...

PLANET PUZZLE



Thanks to the sinister Dr. Eggman, Dark Gaia has begun to stir, leaving the planet cracked and broken! Continents have split apart, and dark creatures emerge at night. Now, the Freedom Fighters are on the hunt for the Chaos Emeralds and Gaia Temples needed to restore the world!

With Sonic the Hedgehog, Amy Rose, Antoine and Bunnie on a mission elsewhere, Princess Sally and the remaining Freedom Fighters find themselves desperately defending the Sky Patrol from attack!

But they aren't the only ones in trouble ...



COLLECTOR COVER SPOTLIGHT

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WEB LYNX VARIANT BY
Rafa Knight

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BIG THE CAT
SELF-EXPLANATORY

GET THESE THINGS OFF MY SHIP!

WORKING ON IT!

ROTOR WALRUS
SKY PATROL CAPTAIN

MILES "TAILS" PROWER
FLYING GENIUS

SALLY ACORN
ROYAL TACTICIAN

SPARK OF LIFE

=PART ONE=



POMF

HOW LONG TILL SUNRISE?!

NICOLE
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

LESS THAN THREE MINUTES! PRECISELY, TWO MINUTES, SEVENTEEN--

I DON'T THINK WE HAVE--**AHH!**

DARK GAIA CREATURES
NIGHT TERRORS FROM THE DEEP

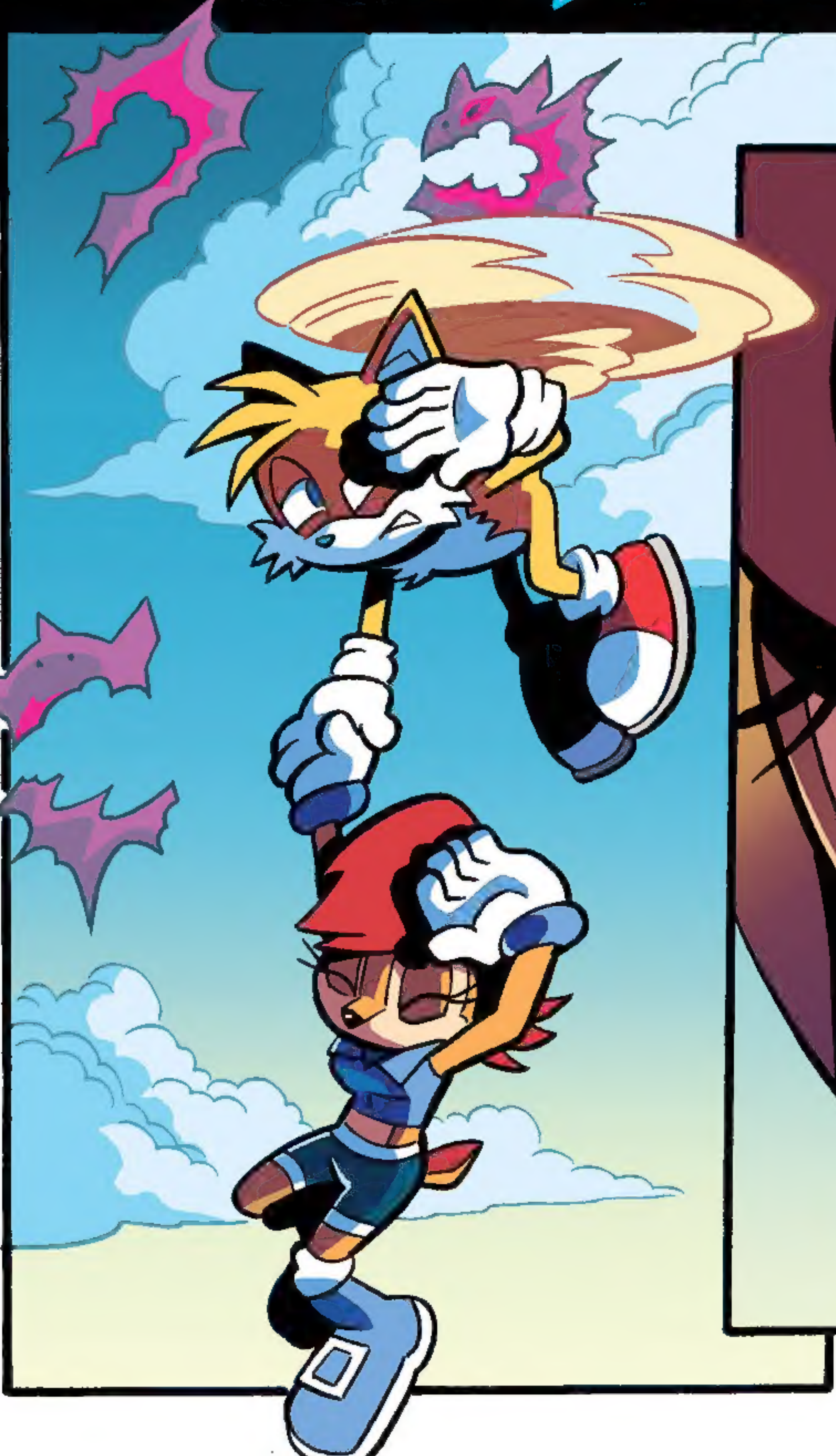
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 of SEGA CORPORATION



POMF

THANKS FOR THE SAVE!

SAME TO YOU!



Heh... THAT FELT LIKE A LONG TWO MINUTES.





IS EVERY-ONE OKAY?!

NO WORRIES, CREAM. WE'RE ALL FINE.

JUST TIRED. POOR T-PUP'S GONNA NEED REPAIRS AGAIN.

CREAM the RABBIT ALWAYS HELPFUL



UGH, SKY PATROL, TOO. NOTHING LIKE GETTING UP BEFORE THE SUN DOES...

Oh! I'll GO MAKE SOME COFFEE.

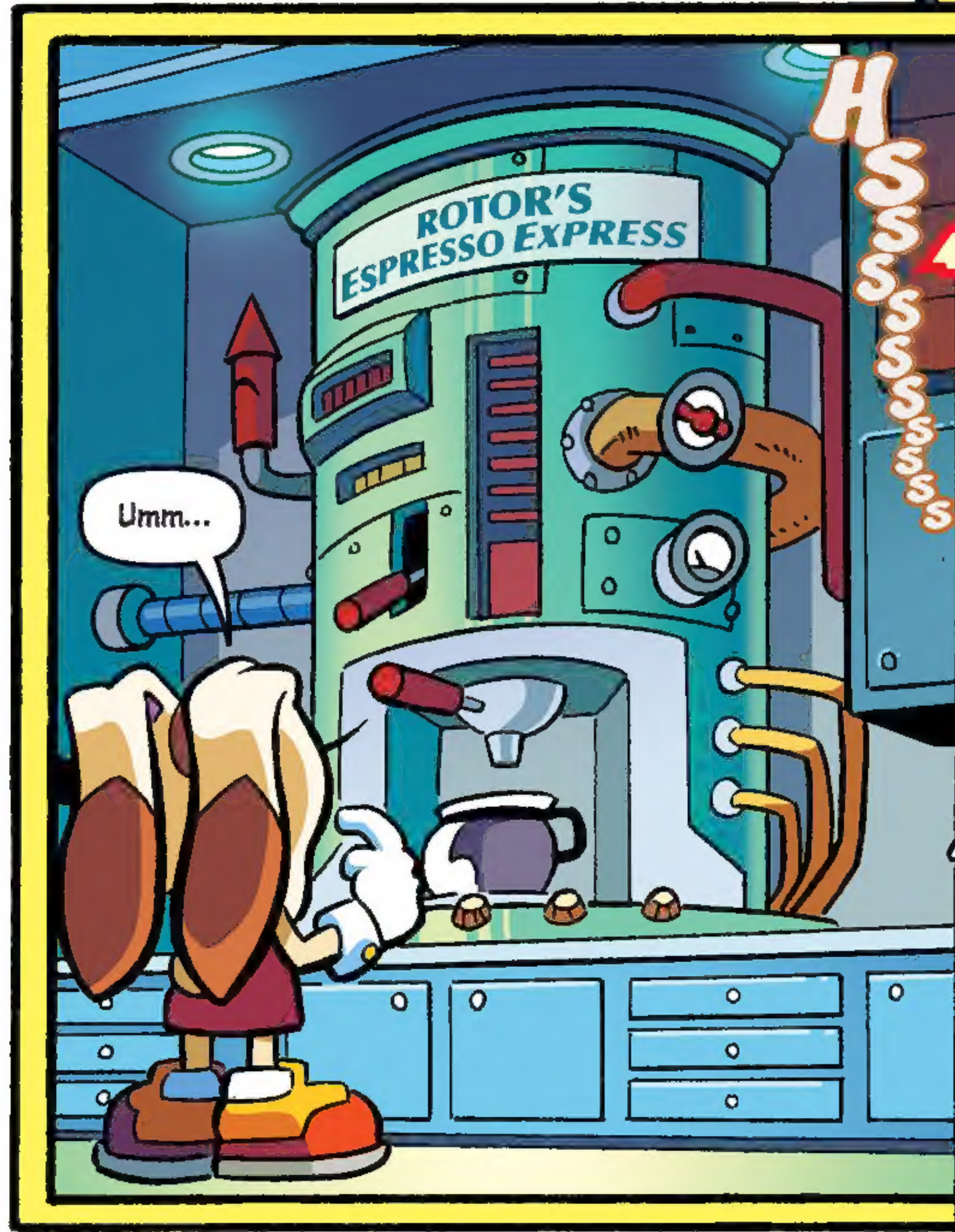
THANKS, KIDDO.



SHE CAN MAKE COFFEE?

APPARENTLY. WITH THE COFFEE MACHINE YOU BUILT?

IT'S NOT THAT COMPLICATED.



Umm...

CRASH



EEP!



GUESS CREAM AND COFFEE DON'T MIX.

PLEASE DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE PROUD OF THAT JOKE.



Oh SHUSH, I'M TIRED.

SALLY... I KNOW EVERYTHING TURNED OUT FOR THE BEST, BUT IF I MAY...

WHAT YOU DID BACK THERE WAS RECKLESS. CREATURES LIKE THE ONES HARASSING TAILS DISAPPEAR ONCE THE SUN RISES. THEY WOULD NOT HAVE LASTED MUCH LONGER.



I KNOW THAT. BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I COULD JUST WATCH AND DO NOTHING, EITHER.



~~SIGH~~ I UNDERSTAND. AT LEAST, I THINK I DO. BUT STILL--

AUGH!



...WHAT... DR. ELLIDY...!



WAIT, WHAT? NICOLE!

NOW WHAT'S WRONG?

SHE'S GONE!







"THE DIGITAL WORLD...
IT'S KIND OF LIKE AN
ARTIFICIAL REALITY.



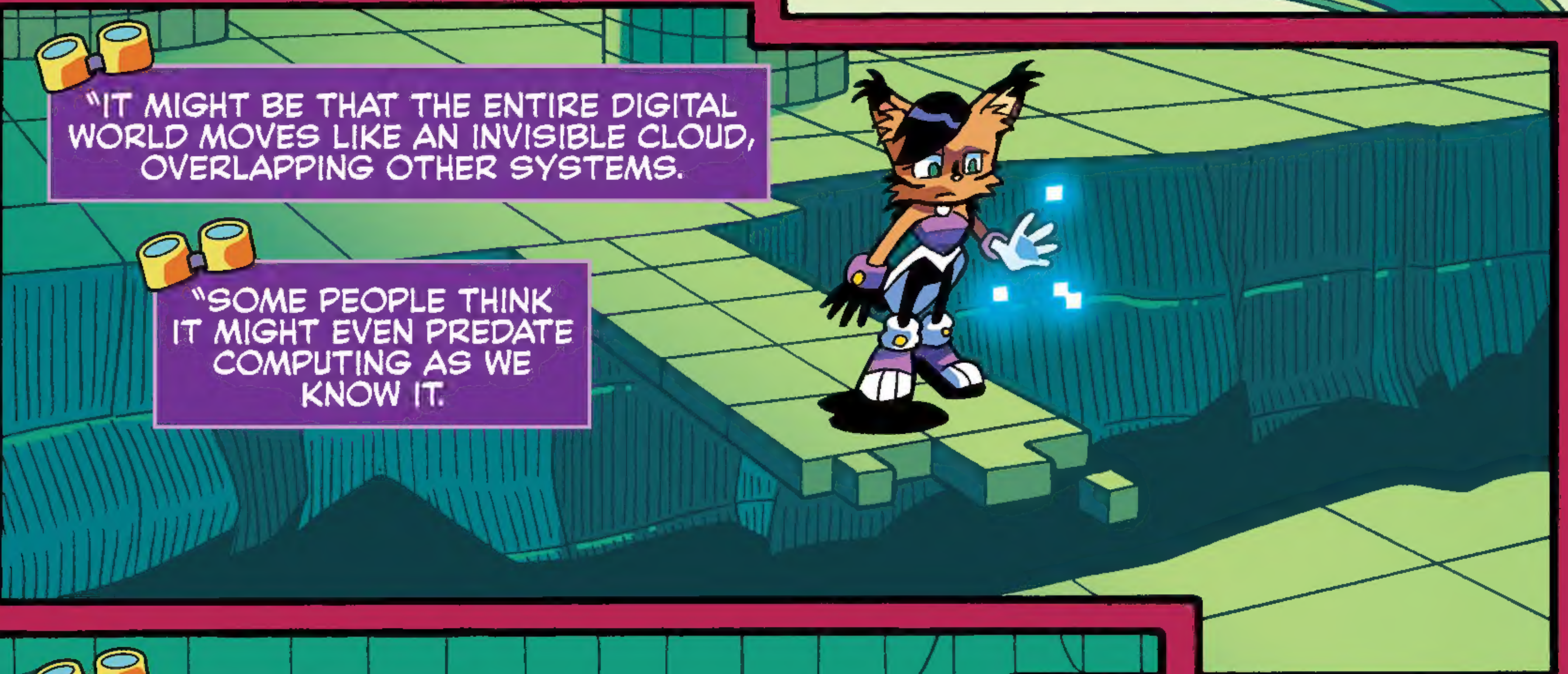
"IT DOESN'T EXIST IN THE REAL WORLD,
WHICH IS TO SAY THAT WHILE IT CAN BE
ACCESSED FROM COMPUTERS..."



"...IT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE
ACTUALLY "HOUSED" IN ONE
ANYWHERE. IN FACT, NO ONE
KNOWS WHERE IT CAME
FROM.



"IT MIGHT BE THAT THE ENTIRE DIGITAL
WORLD MOVES LIKE AN INVISIBLE CLOUD,
OVERLAPPING OTHER SYSTEMS.



"SOME PEOPLE THINK
IT MIGHT EVEN PREDATE
COMPUTING AS WE
KNOW IT.



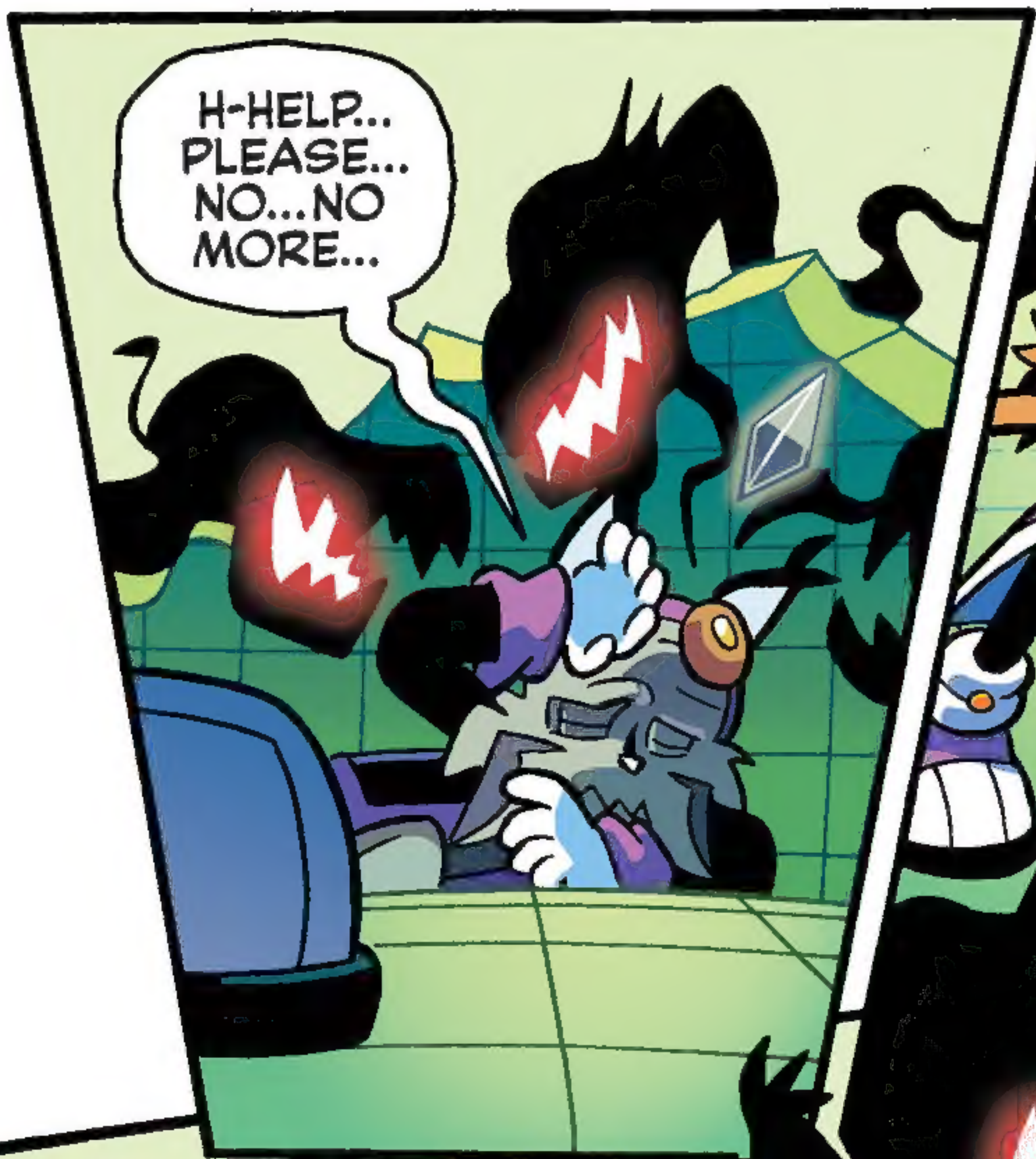
"TO BE HONEST, WHAT
WE KNOW IS MORE
THEORY THAN FACT.



"WHATEVER'S GOING ON...
IF DR. ELLIDY IS IN TROUBLE
AND CALLED OUT THROUGH
THE DIGITAL WORLD
SOMEHOW..."



"...NICOLE MAY BE THE
ONLY ONE WHO CAN
HELP."



H-HELP... PLEASE... NO... NO MORE...



GET AWAY FROM HIM!



WHATEVER THESE ARE, THEY'RE INSISTENT.



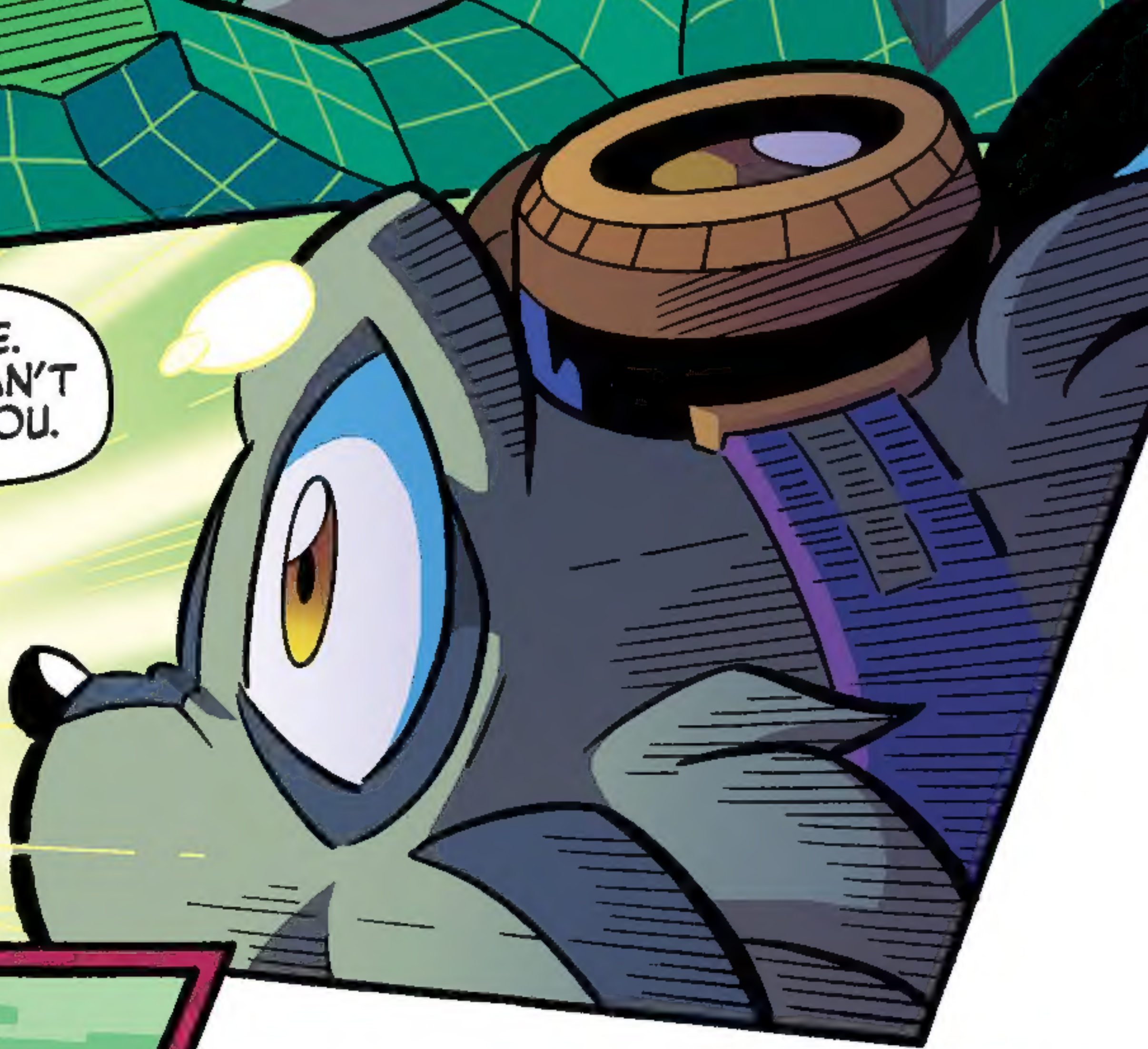
I HAVE NO CHOICE...

VWOOSH



THERE. THEY CAN'T HURT YOU.

...IT CAN'T BE... N-NIC--



HELLO, DOCTOR. I SUPPOSE IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.

...NICOLE...



MEANWHILE...



I HAVEN'T SEEN DR. ELLIDY SINCE I WAS LITTLE.



Um... SO DR. ELLIDY IS NICOLE'S FATHER?



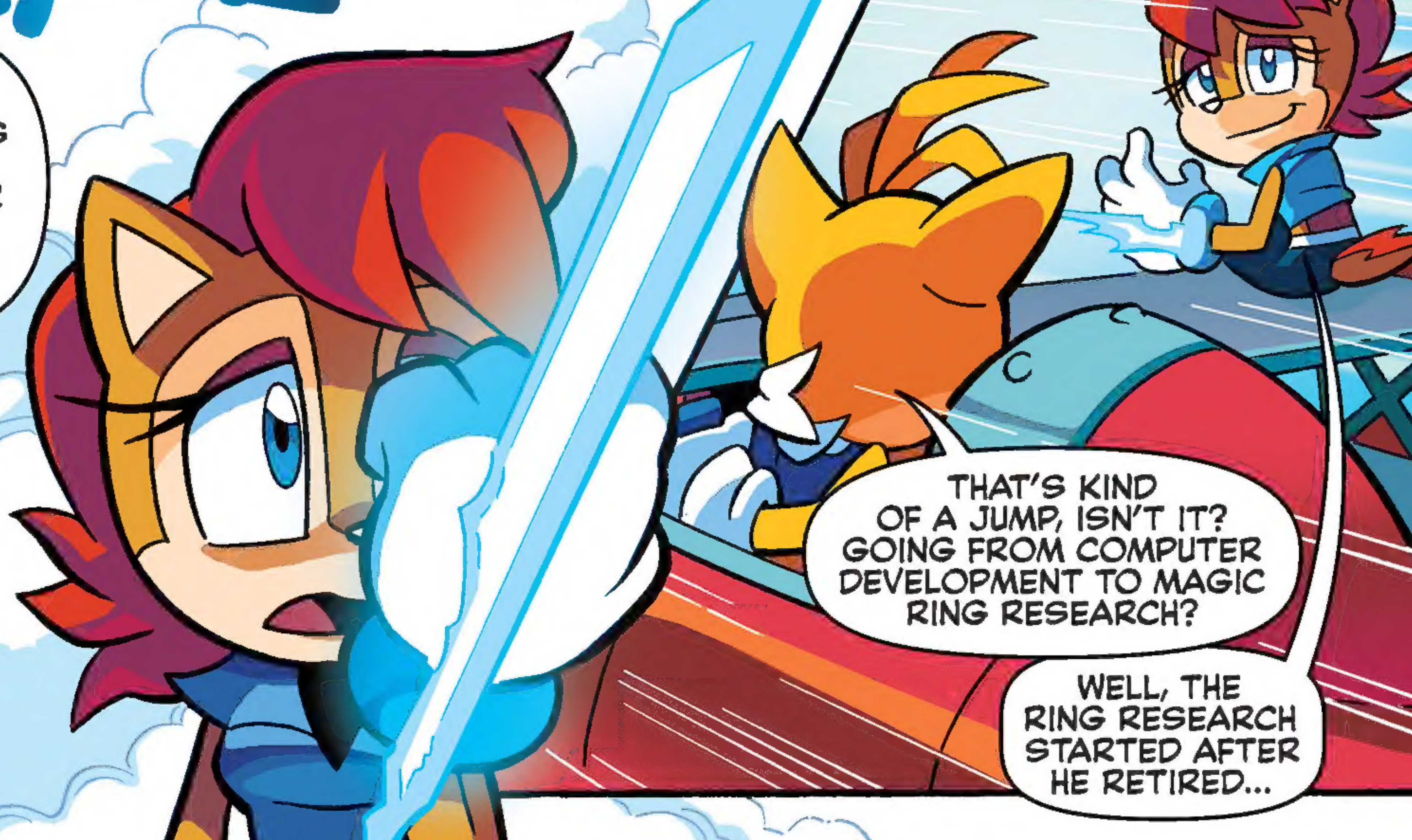
YOU COULD SAY THAT.

HE'S ALSO THE GUY WHO MADE THE MOBOTROPOLIS GRAND ARCHIVE, RIGHT? IT'S GOT INFORMATION ON JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING! I COULD SIT FOR HOURS READING IT... Uh, NOT THAT I HAVE.

WELL, NOT TOO OFTEN,

BACK WHEN HE WORKED FOR MY FATHER, HE WAS THE KINGDOM'S LEAD RESEARCHER AND DEVELOPER FOR COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY.

HE ALSO MADE THESE RING-BLADES FOR ME, LATER ON.



THAT'S KIND OF A JUMP, ISN'T IT? GOING FROM COMPUTER DEVELOPMENT TO MAGIC RING RESEARCH?

WELL, THE RING RESEARCH STARTED AFTER HE RETIRED...

"...A LOT OF THINGS CHANGED..."

THE PAST.

MY BOAT LEAVES IN A COUPLE HOURS, KING ACORN. I'D BETTER BE ON MY WAY.

I'M STILL SAD TO SEE YOU GO, OLD FRIEND. YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH FOR THIS KINGDOM.

IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO...

I KNOW. I KNOW.

PLEASE DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELF WITH ME, SIRE. I THINK THIS MOVE IS JUST WHAT I NEED. A FRESH START OF SORTS...

THERE ARE... TOO MANY OLD MEMORIES HERE...

I UNDERSTAND.

ARE YOU REALLY LEAVING, DR. ELLIDY?

Ah... JUST THE PRINCESS I WANTED TO SEE!

HERE... BEFORE I GO, I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU.

A PRESENT?

AT FIRST, I WASN'T SURE WHAT I WANTED TO DO WITH THIS... BUT I THINK YOU'LL MAKE THE BEST USE OF IT.

THIS IS MY MOST POWERFUL COMPUTER TO DATE. IT HOUSES AN ADVANCED A.I.-- A VERY SMART PROGRAM--THAT CONNECTS DIRECTLY TO THE GRAND ARCHIVE.

WITH THIS, YOU'LL HAVE A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE AT YOUR FINGERTIPS.



WOW... SO I CAN ASK IT ANYTHING?

AFFIRMATIVE, PRINCESS SALLY.

Oh, IT TALKS! ...AND IT KNOWS MY NAME!



YES, ALL OF ITS SOFTWARE IS STATE-OF-THE-ART.

BUT WHAT'S HER NAME?

HER... NAME?



YEAH! SHE SOUNDS LIKE A GIRL. SO WHAT SHOULD I CALL HER?

Ah... WELL... HOW ABOUT... NI... Oh, NO...



HOW ABOUT "NICOLE"? AFTER A LONG-PAST QUEEN OF OUR LINE.

Ooh, I LOVE IT! YOUR NAME IS NICOLE, OKAY?

ACKNOWLEDGED. NEW DESIGNATION ACCEPTED.



THANK YOU SO MUCH, DR. ELLIDY! I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF NICOLE, I PROMISE!

I KNOW YOU WILL, YOUR HIGHNESS. AND YOU AND YOUR FATHER...



TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER!!

THE DIGITAL WORLD,
PRESENT DAY.

SO YOU DIGITIZED
YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS...
THEN YOU FOUND YOURSELF
TRAPPED OUT HERE?

Y-YES. I WAS
INVESTIGATING A
PROBLEM... THOUGHT
I'D TAKE A DIRECT
APPROACH. I'D DONE
IT BEFORE, WITH-
OUT INCIDENT.

I'VE ALWAYS
BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT THE
DIGITAL WORLD. I CAME ACROSS
THIS DISTORTION, AND...

SIGH OKAY, I WANDERED.
I THOUGHT I KNEW HOW TO...
GET BACK, B-BUT THERE'S
THIS BLOCKADE NOW...

I T-TRIED TO
WORK AROUND IT,
BUT THEN THOSE...
THINGS BEGAN TO
F-FOLLOW ME.

I DREAD TO
THINK OF HOW LONG
I'VE BEEN IN HERE...
PROBABLY
DEHYDRATED...

IT WAS ALL I
COULD DO TO
SEND OUT A CALL
FOR HELP. TO THINK
YOU WOULD BE THE
ONE TO ANSWER
IT...!

MORE
LIKE I
FELT
IT.

YOUR PHYSICAL
FORM, THIS... AVATAR
OF YOURS. IS IT
SOMETHING SALLY
ASSIGNED TO
YOU?

NO. I CHOSE
THIS FORM FOR
MYSELF.

YOU...
CHOSE IT.
I SEE.

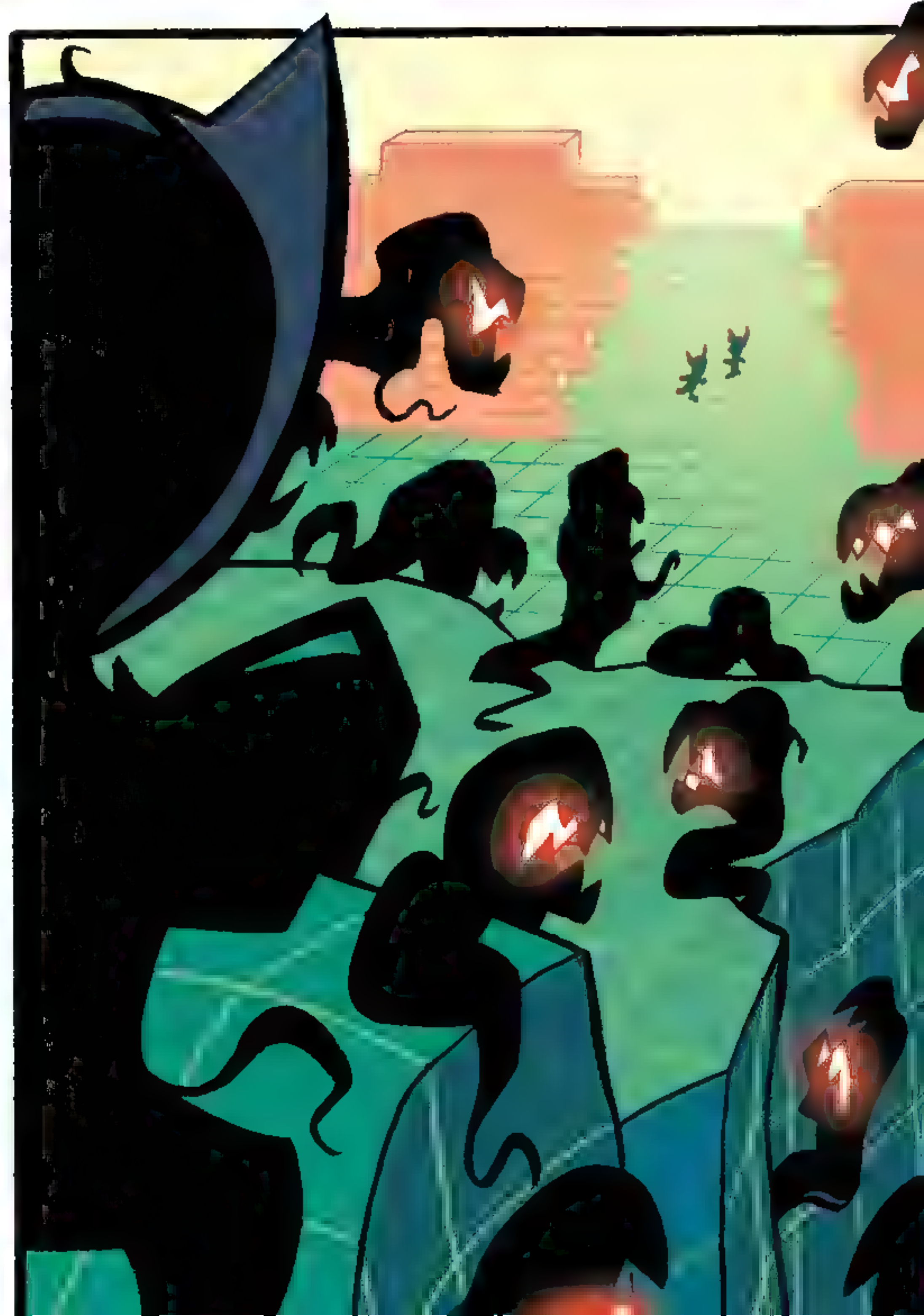
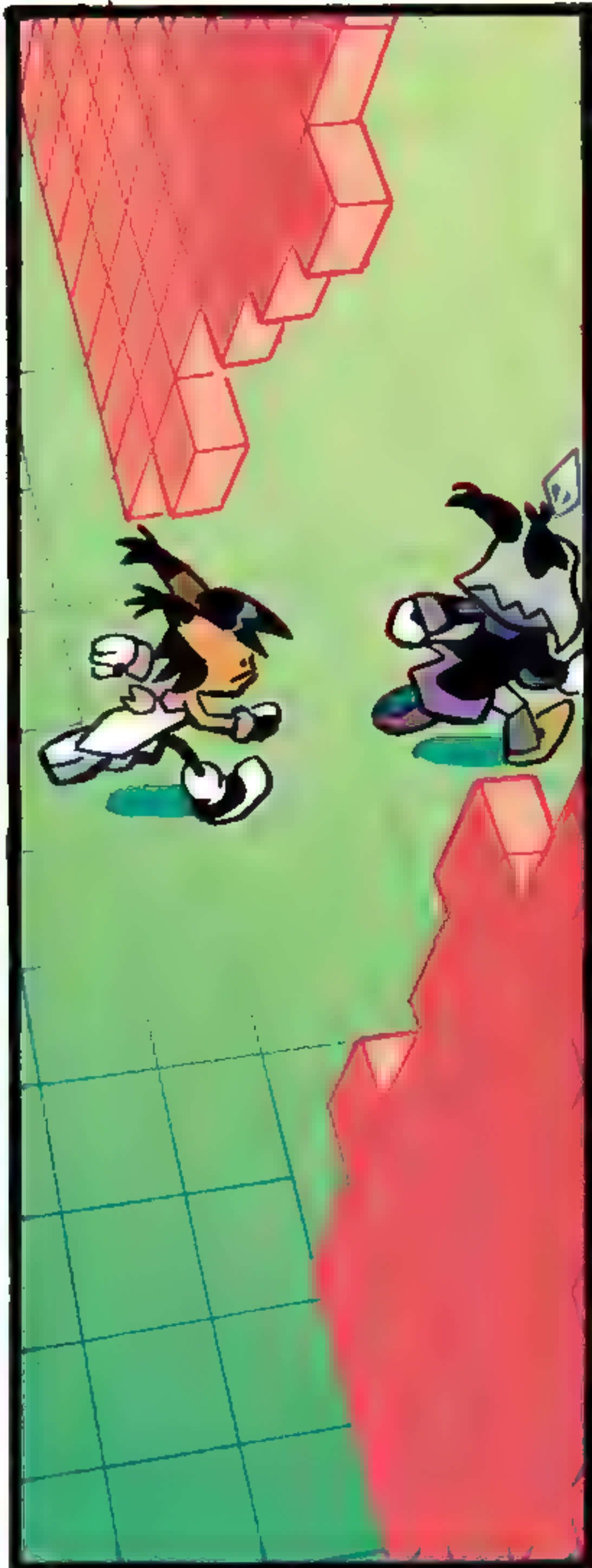
PLEASE KEEP
MOVING. BEING
HERE SO LONG
CAN'T BE
HEALTHY.

Oh!
THERE!

I ENTERED THE
DIGITAL WORLD
JUST BEYOND
THAT BLOCKADE!

I SEE IT.
DO NOT WORRY,
DR. ELLIDY.

I'LL
GET YOU
HOME.



ISOLATED ISLAND

SORRY I COULDN'T LAND US ANY CLOSER.

DR. ELLIDY'S PLACE SHOULD BE RIGHT OVER THERE.

YES. I SAW IT RIGHT BEFORE WE LANDED. LET'S GO. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ANYTHING UNUSUAL.

THIS ISLAND IS NICE. REMINDS ME OF HOME.

THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE A LAKE OF RINGS HERE, RIGHT?

YES. DR. ELLIDY ONLY STARTED RESEARCHING RINGS ONCE HE MOVED HERE.

WHEN HE SENT ME THESE RING-BLADES, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME WE'D HEARD FROM HIM IN YEARS.

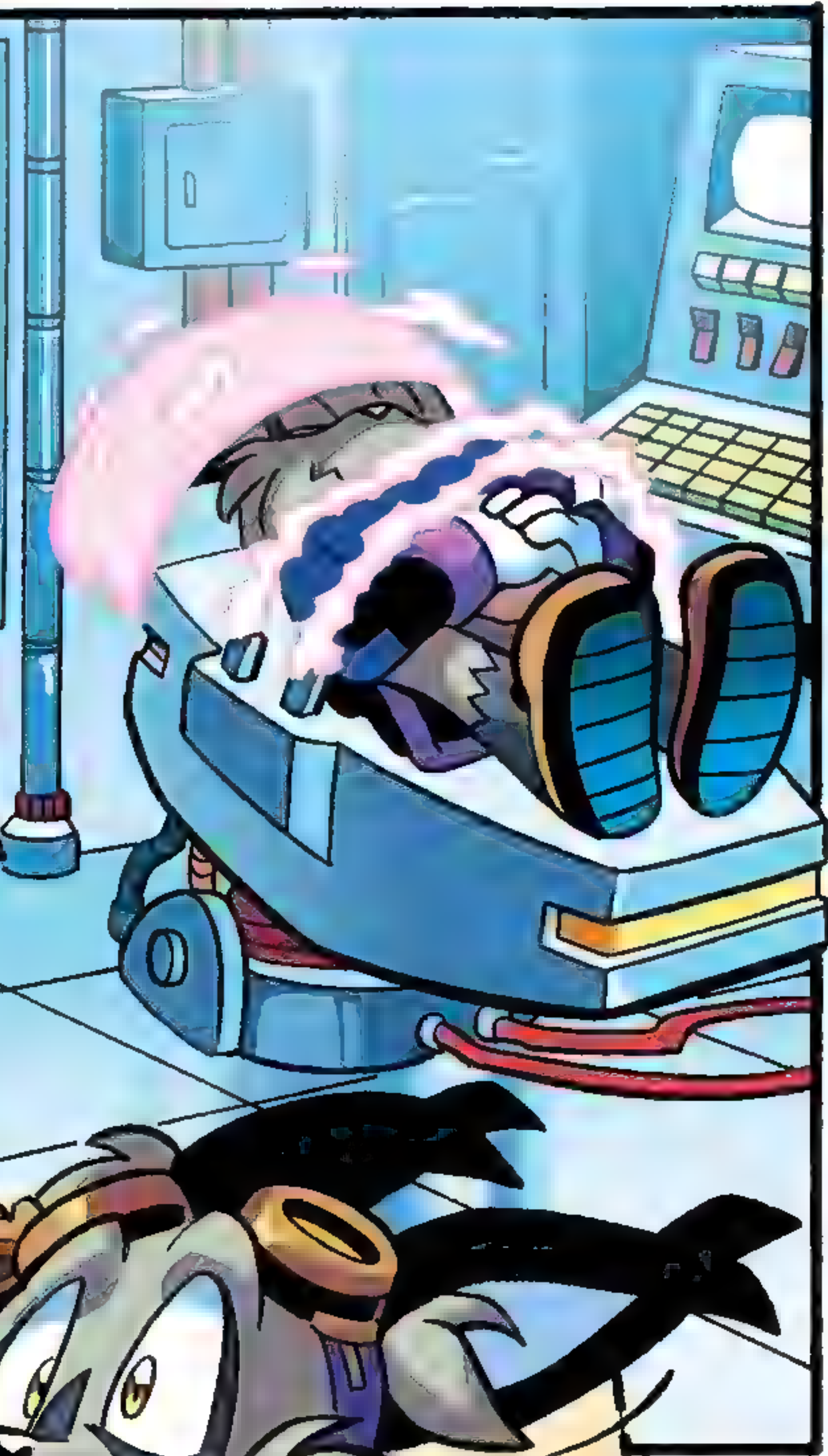
IT SOUNDS SO...LONELY.

YEAH.

EVEN IN THE MYSTIC RUINS, I ALWAYS HAD FROGGY WITH ME!

I HOPE NICOLE IS OKAY.

WHATEVER'S HAPPENING HERE COULD--





DR. ELLIDY!
IT'S SALLY ACORN!
ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT?

P-PRINCESS
SALLY... WHA...
OH, MY HEAD...



PERFECT
TIMING. SORRY
FOR LEAVING
SKY PATROL SO
ABRUPTLY.

NICOLE!
HERE, JUST
A SEC...



THE DOCTOR HAD DIGITIZED
HIS CONSCIOUSNESS AND
GOTTEN TRAPPED IN THE
DIGITAL WORLD FOR
SEVERAL HOURS.

BIG, GET
SOME WATER,
PLEASE.

OKAY!



Oh,
THANK
YOU...

THANK YOU
ALL SO MUCH
FOR COMING...

IT'S THANKS
TO NICOLE THAT
WE EVEN KNEW
YOU WERE IN
TROUBLE.

IN FACT...
WHY DON'T
YOU THANK
HER IN
PERSON?



IN...IN
PERSON?

...HOW...



LIKE I
SAID, IT'S
BEEN A
LONG
TIME...

AND...I'VE
LEARNED A FEW
TRICKS SINCE YOU
FIRST CREATED
ME.

SHORTLY...



I FOUND A CAN OF BROTH IN THE KITCHEN. HOPE YOU DON'T MIND... YOU NEED TO GET YOUR STRENGTH UP.

Oh, THANK YOU.



I ADDED SOME HERBS FROM SOME OF THE POTTED PLANTS IN THERE...

TRUTH BE TOLD, WITH CREAM AND ANTOINE ON THE SKY PATROL, I DON'T GET TO COOK MUCH.



IT'S VERY... BRACING.

WELL... GOOD.

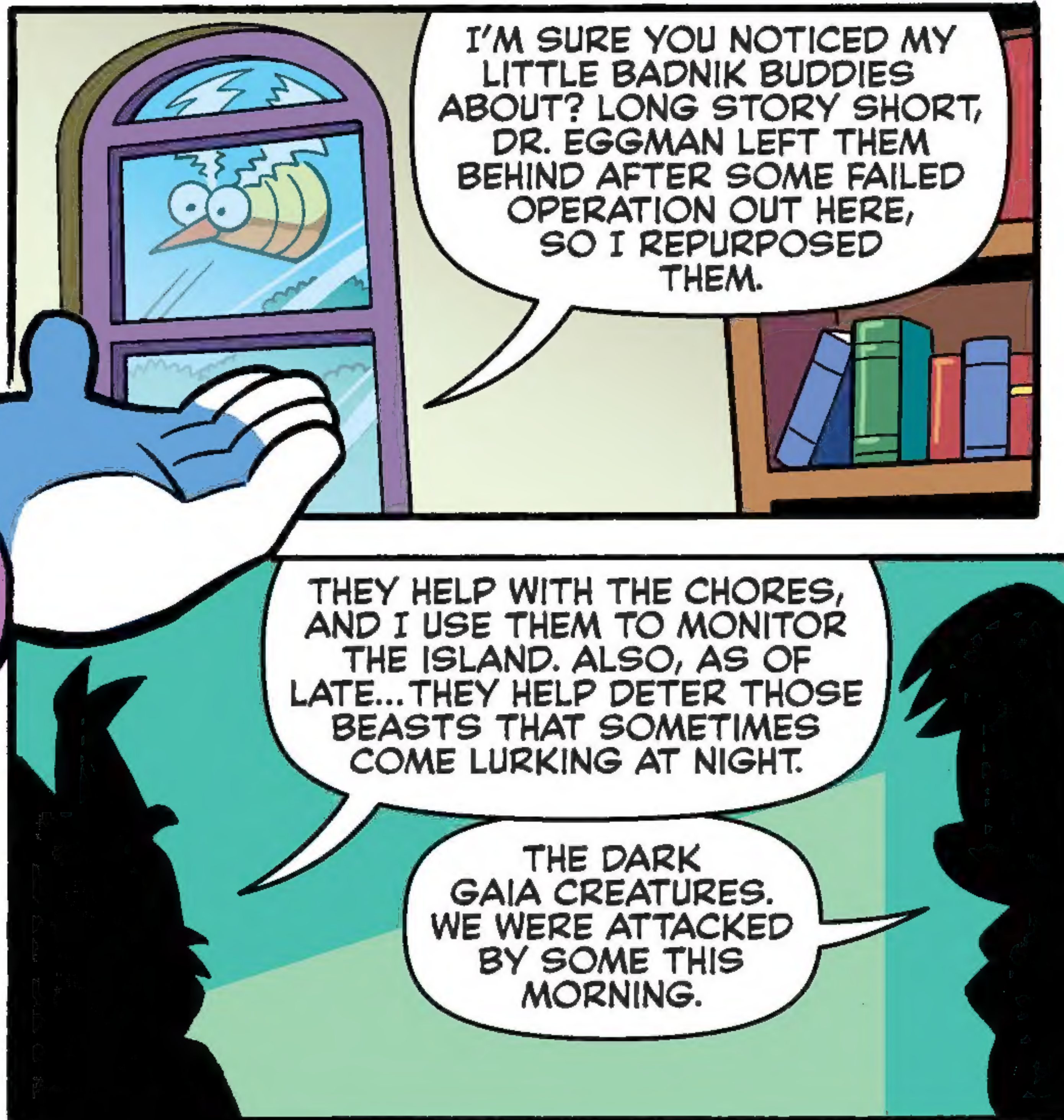
DOCTOR, IF YOU DON'T MIND... WHAT'S GOING ON?



I'M SURE YOU NOTICED MY LITTLE BADNIK BUDDIES ABOUT? LONG STORY SHORT, DR. EGGMAN LEFT THEM BEHIND AFTER SOME FAILED OPERATION OUT HERE, SO I REPURPOSED THEM.

THEY HELP WITH THE CHORES, AND I USE THEM TO MONITOR THE ISLAND. ALSO, AS OF LATE... THEY HELP DETER THOSE BEASTS THAT SOMETIMES COME LURKING AT NIGHT.

THE DARK GAIA CREATURES. WE WERE ATTACKED BY SOME THIS MORNING.



IT'S HORRIFIC. CHUCK CALLED ME TO EXPLAIN WHAT WAS GOING ON, HOPING I HAD SOME INSIGHT. NOT REALLY MY FIELD, OF COURSE... BUT I'M GLAD THAT YOU ARE TAKING ACTION.

AFTER THE QUAKES,* I SENT SOME OF MY ROBOTS OUT TO INVESTIGATE. SOME OF THE FOOTAGE I RECEIVED... THE WATER JUST **STOPS** AND THEN, NOTHING BUT A CLOUDED ABYSS... I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE OCEAN ITSELF HASN'T POURED OFF THE EDGE.

*THE WORLD SHATTERED APART IN SONIC THE HEDGEHOG VOL. 1 GRAPHIC NOVEL--EDITOR

ACTUALLY, ABOUT THAT... "IT'S MAGIC" SUMS IT UP PRETTY WELL.*

I HATE THAT EXCUSE.

EVEN WHEN IT'S ACCURATE?

ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S ACCURATE.

DOCTOR, I WANTED TO DISCUSS SOMETHING WITH YOU.

*WE DISCOVERED WHY IN "WAVES OF CHANGE"! STH #260-263--EDITOR

ACTUALLY... I THINK I NEED TO GO LIE DOWN. I'M STILL NOT FEELING WELL...

LET ME HELP.

NO, NO, DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELF. I JUST NEED TO REST FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

NICOLE... WE CAN TALK LATER.

...VERY WELL.



SALLY...
AM I CAUSING
DR. ELLIDY
DISTRESS?

I THINK HE'S
JUST HAD A ROUGH
DAY, NICOLE. YOU'VE
CHANGED A LOT
SINCE HE LAST
SAW YOU.

HE'S BEEN
LIVING OUT HERE
ALL ALONE FOR
A WHILE NOW. I
WOULDN'T TAKE IT
PERSONALLY IF HE'S
A BIT DISTANT.
OKAY?



ALL
RIGHT.



ACTUALLY, HE DIDN'T
REALLY ANSWER MY
QUESTION ABOUT WHAT
WAS GOING ON HERE.

HE WAS
ATTEMPTING TO
USE THE DIGITIZER
TO TROUBLESHOOT
A PROBLEM WITH
THE REPROGRAMMED
BADNIKS WHEN HE
WAS STRANDED IN
THE DIGITAL
WORLD.

ABOUT
THAT...



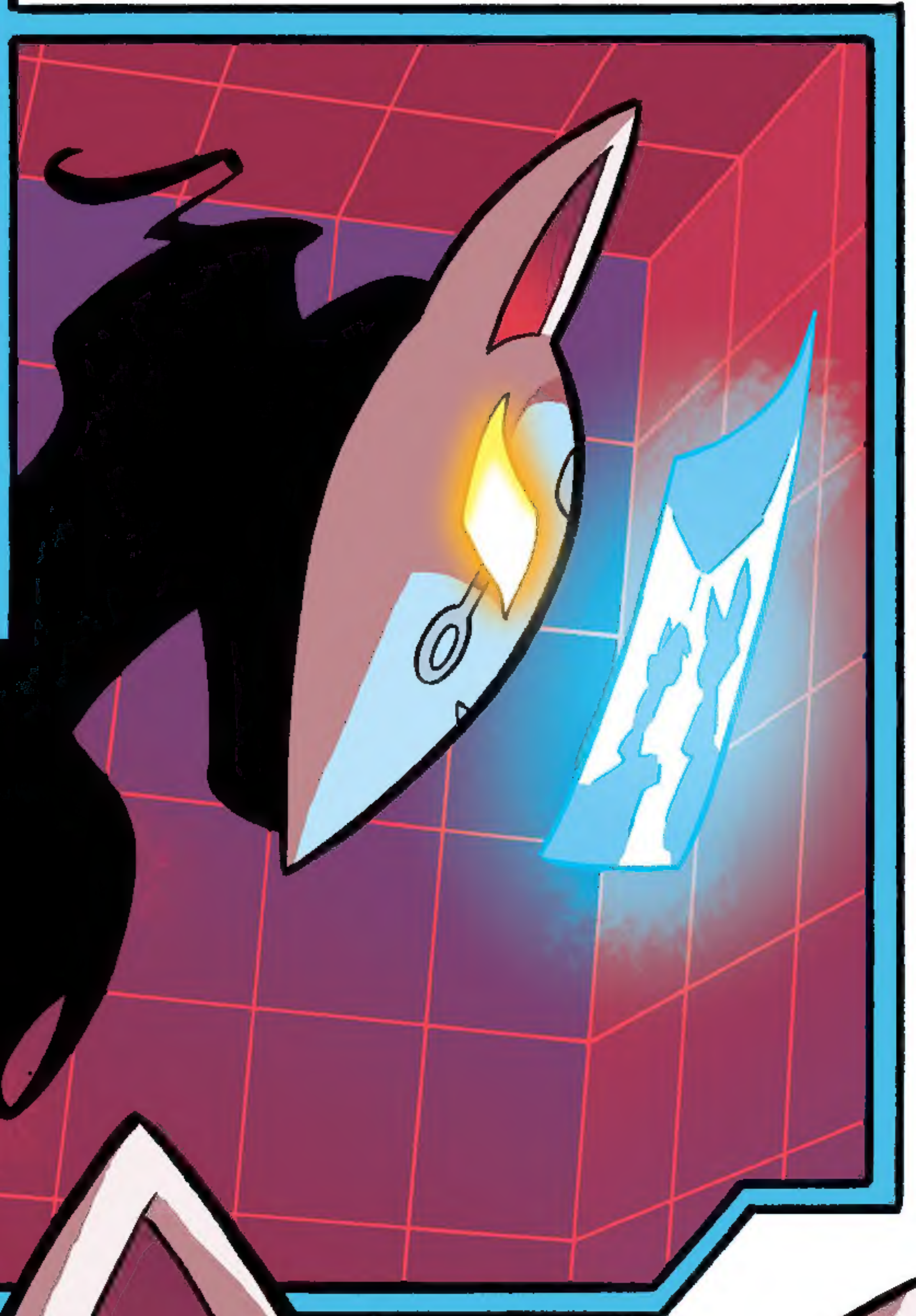
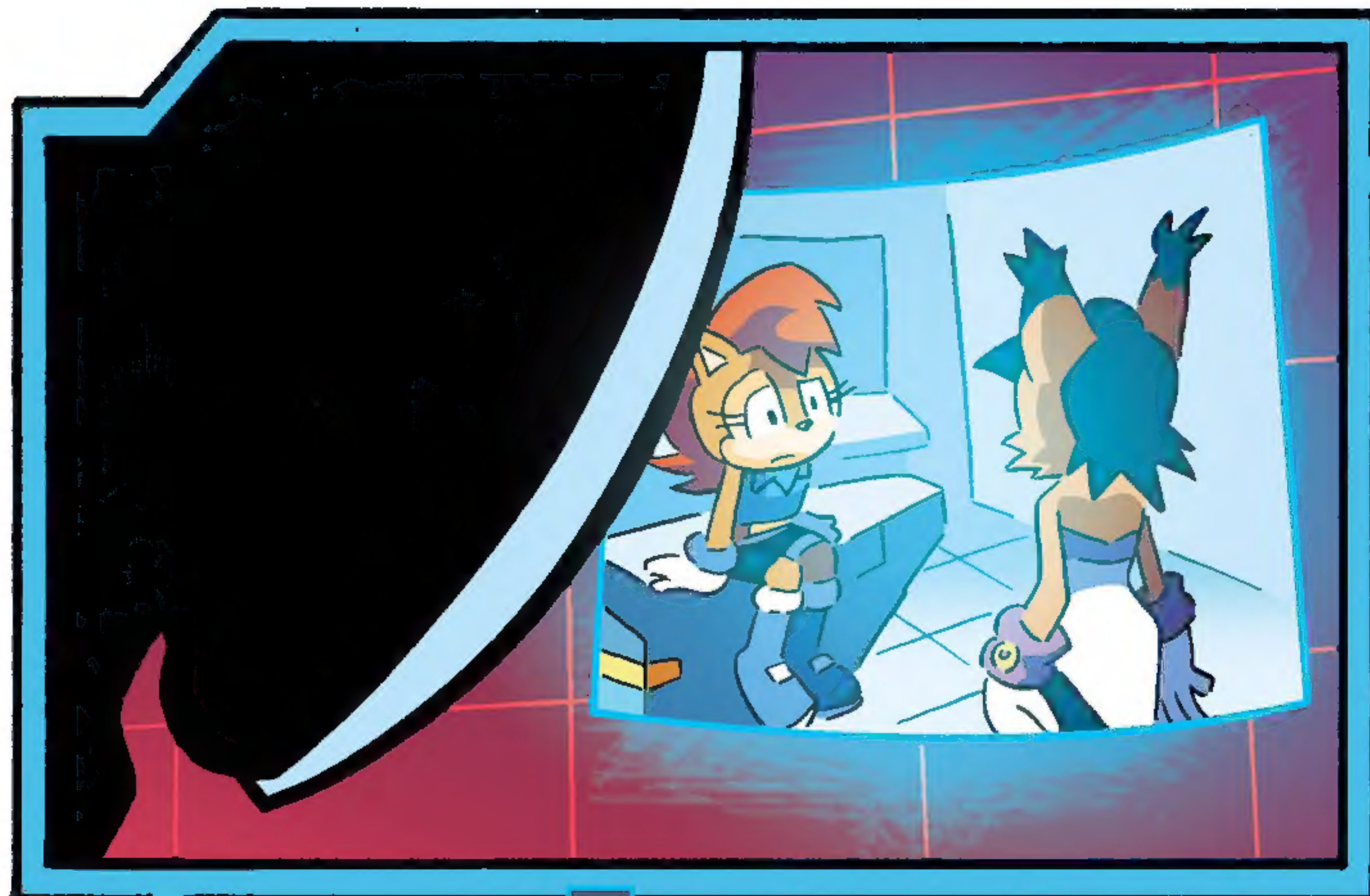
...I
BELIEVE THAT
SOMEONE OR
SOMETHING
DELIBERATELY
ATTEMPTED TO
PREVENT HIM
FROM LEAVING
THE DIGITAL
WORLD.



AND NOW I'M CONCERNED
THAT WHATEVER OR WHOEVER
PLACED THE BARRICADE
MAY HAVE BEEN LED
BACK HERE...



...OR MAY
ALREADY
BE HERE.



AN ORGANIC BEING ABLE TO PROJECT A DIGITAL BODY...

A DIGITAL BEING ABLE TO PROJECT A PHYSICAL BODY...

HOW VERY...

FASCINATING.

THERE'S A
GHOST
IN THE MACHINE--
BUT WILL ANYONE
NOTICE IN TIME?

FIND OUT NEXT MONTH IN

SPARK
LiFE

OF

PART TWO

UNTIL THEN, DON'T MISS OUT
ON SONIC THE HEDGEHOG,
SONIC SUPER SPECIAL MAGAZINE,
SONIC SUPER DIGEST
and the GRAPHIC NOVEL LIBRARY.
PLUS, THERE'S EVEN MORE
FUN IN THE BRAND NEW SERIES
SONIC BOOM!